

BRADFORD FAMILY

Occupants of the Captain

Gershom Bradford House

written by donor G.B.

The Captain built it in 1808 and occupied it until his death in 1844, except when at sea. His wife Sarah Hickling lived on until 1862. Her mother Elizabeth Hodson Hickling, after her husband died, came to spend her last days with her daughter. She brought the Hickling desk, the dress sword of her husband who was a civil engineer and served as paymaster of the Alden regiment at Cherry Valley Massacre, but somehow escaped. Elizabeth Hickling, an admirable person, died in 1827 and rests in Capt. Gershom's lot in Duxbury.

Capt. Gershom had four daughters. Maria married her third cousin the Rev. Claudius Bradford, living in many places, but the old house was her home. Lucia was literary and wrote some poetry. Maria died in Washington in about 1863. Elizabeth was a botanist. I believe her collection is in our public library. She died about 1890. Charlotte was a distinguished Civil War nurse. Lucia and Charlotte died about a week apart in 1893, perhaps 1894.

My father inherited the house; his brother Gershom and sister wanted it in the family. They were children of Maria. While Gershom and Lucia never actually lived there they looked upon it as home.

Uncle Gershom went to sea in 1853 at 16 on a voyage around the world. He remained close to the sea all his active life commanding vessels of the U.S. Coastal survey. Father shipped out around Cape Horn at 17. He rounded the Horn four times. Then he entered the Navy in 1863 as a junior officer, had highly interesting service.

Lucia married the Rev. Frederick V. Knapp who served as the Chief of Special Relief of the Sanitary Commission, the Red Cross of that war. He performed distinguished service, coming to Plymouth after the war.

Uncle Gershom married Minnie Winsor daughter of Capt. Charles F. Winsor of Duxbury. Father married Hattie H. Phipps of Kingston, a daughter of the Rev. Joseph Phipps. She lived in the old house from 1894 until 1903 when that winter they went to a modern house on Cedar St., coming back to the old house in the summer until she died in 1931. Father died in 1909, Uncle Gershom 1918, Lucia Knapp about 1924 and Minnie about 1930.